

WYOMING'S SURPRISING INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS

(Special to The Herald.)
CHEYENNE, Wyo., Dec. 26.—The story of Wyoming's industrial progress during the year 1903 presents many surprises, for while some industries made substantial, and in a few instances, phenomenal growth, others retrograded. Gold, copper and iron mining was not prosecuted with the same vigor as in 1902, and although the returns are not all in from the mines of the western and southern portions of the state, it is believed that the output of coal will show a decrease during the year. The livestock industry in Wyoming shared the same fate as in other states, and the returns show a loss in mutton and wool and beef production.

Irrigated agriculture made rapid strides, and the record of ditches constructed and acres of land reclaimed during the year is unequalled by that of any previous season in the state's history.

Marked progress was also made in the development of the state's oil fields, several rich strikes being recorded during the year.

The people of the state are highly gratified at the record made during the past twelve months in the face of unfavorable conditions, and they enter the new year with confidence and the determination to make 1904 the banner year in the state's industrial advancement.

State in Good Condition.
Wyoming's state government was never in a more flourishing condition than now. The various state offices have been conducted economically, new buildings have been built and old ones enlarged and the scope of work extended all along the line to meet the demands of the increasing population and the rapid development of the numerous industries.

Wyoming's bonded indebtedness is now \$250,000, but this amount will be reduced to \$200,000 in a few days, there being \$50,000 now en route to New York to take up a portion of the bonds.

The state levy for 1902 was \$24,768.35, but of this amount less than \$10,000 has been collected.

The total revenues for the year ending Sept. 30, 1902, are as follows:

In 1902 these revenues produced \$3,222,222. From state tax \$2,439,331. Sale and rental of lands \$136,190. From other sources \$646,691.

The total revenues derived during the year ending Sept. 30, 1902, were \$7,893,022.

The bonded indebtedness of the several counties in the state, exclusive of the state's indebtedness of \$250,000, is as follows:

County bonds, \$1,109,220; school district bonds, \$255,650.50.

This is a decrease from 1902 of \$127,150 in county bonds, and an increase during the same period of \$57,961.50 in school district bonds. The increased indebtedness in school bonds was due to the fact that more school houses are being built, which in itself indicates Wyoming's growth in population.

The condition of the banks of the state, which is perhaps a true barometer of business conditions generally in a commonwealth, are very satisfactory, although no such phenomenal gains were made in 1903 as during the preceding year.

The total deposits in 1902 were \$3,083,426, and the deposits now are \$3,179,981, an increase of \$96,555.

Based on the population as given in the last census, the wealth in the state is far in excess of the per capita wealth of any other state or territory in the union. It is believed that the population of Wyoming has increased to fully 100,000 since the census was taken, and if so this would cut down the per capita wealth slightly, but still the state would lead all others in per capita wealth.

Great Irrigation Development.
There has been no period in the history of the state when there has been as much irrigation development as during 1903. A large portion of the work of actual construction has taken place in Big Horn county, which is destined to be the great agricultural section of the state. Along the Shoshone river some of the best canal work has been completed, not taking into consideration many small ditches. The large canals there will serve to irrigate 20,000 acres of this area all has been reclaimed with the exception of a few thousand acres and is practically all settled under the provisions of the Carey act. One of the largest canals was built only two years ago and today it covers an area of 26,000 acres. This land has all been taken up by the Mormon settlers, who have built a large beet sugar factory.

Colonel W. P. Cody has secured sufficient funds to begin the construction of the original Cody-Salisburg canal. This big ditch will be about seventy-five miles long and will carry sufficient water to irrigate several hundred thousand acres of land. Of the tract to be irrigated, however, 80,000 acres have already been segregated under the Carey act, and there is an additional tract of 35,000 acres to be reclaimed. The canal will be taken from the Shoshone river six miles above Cody and in a deep canyon in Cedar mountain. The line will be laid out on the north side of the river. The cost of this project will approximate \$1,000,000.

The Oregon project, between the Shoshone and Greybull rivers, is the largest yet undertaken in the state. The company propose to divert water from the south fork of the Shoshone and convey it through a series of canals to a natural reservoir, from which it will be carried by a system of canals to the lands to be irrigated. The reservoir, when completed, will be about 700,000 acre-feet of water, and the system will reclaim about 25,000 acres of land.

A Mormon Enterprise.
The Mormon settlers will go ahead with the Willow Creek project. They propose to divert water from the south bank of the Shoshone about fifteen miles east of Cody. The ditch will be forty miles long and will irrigate 30,000 acres. Work on the project will begin in the spring.

There has been considerable development on the Big Horn river and numerous enterprises have been planned. Among these is the Hanover canal, taken from the west side of the Big Horn river, between Thermopolis and the mouth of the Nowood. It will be thirty miles long and will reclaim 15,000 acres.

The Bluff canal diverts water from the west bank of the stream and will be fifteen miles long and will irrigate 10,000 acres.

The Big Horn Basin canal, near Basin City, will be twenty-two miles long and will irrigate 8,000 acres.

While material progress has been made in irrigation development in the Big Horn basin country, other portions of the state have not been idle and many projects are either under way at this time or have been planned. Among the more important may be mentioned the following:

The Boulder canal will take water from Boulder creek, a tributary of New Fork, in Fremont county. It will be fifteen miles long and will irrigate 6,000 acres of the best natural soil in the state.

It will divert water from the Snake river, a tributary of the Snake river, in Blaine county. It will be fifteen miles long and will irrigate 6,000 acres of the best natural soil in the state.

The coming year promises much in the way of new roads. The Laramie, Hahn's Peak & Pacific will complete its line to Centennial and have that portion of the road in operation, while the grade will be extended toward Grand Encampment. Among the prospective roads, work upon which will probably be commenced during the coming year, are the extension of the Calumet-Cody line of the Burlington to Meeteetse, the Kirwin mines and possibly to the Yellowstone valley. A branch line may also be built from Garland to the Bonanza oil fields. The Colorado Fuel & Iron company will build a number of spur lines to connect the iron mines with the Wyoming & Colorado at Sunrise, in northern Laramie county. The Union Pacific may build a branch line from Alameda to the Bonanza and Grand Encampment. The Belgo-American Oil Drilling trust, which recently purchased properties at base and salt wells, has also begun to build a road from Casper to Lander, via Alameda and Johnstown. And there are other lines of railroad projected, and many of them will be commenced during the coming year.

During the year Wyoming's oil fields in Uinta county, Fremont, Sweetwater, Big Horn, Natrona, Weston and Crook counties received considerable attention and many thousands of dollars was expended in development work. The oil fields in these counties are being developed by the oil companies, and the results are being turned out in great quantities of oil. In the Salt Wells fields in Sweetwater county and in the Popo Agie fields in Fremont county the Belgo-American company put down a number of wells and the results are being turned out in great quantities of oil. In the Newcastle and Moorcroft fields, in Weston and Crook counties respectively, several wells were drilled, while in the Bonanza fields three producing wells were brought in.

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Fremont's lake as a storage reservoir, and carrying the water a distance of ten miles, will reclaim 8,262 acres. The Goshute Hole canal, in northern Laramie county, is one of the largest projects in the state. This canal will be sixty miles in length and will reclaim 28,000 acres.

Applications have been received at the office of the state engineer for a permit to appropriate water as follows: The French & Brush creek canal, thirty miles in length, irrigates 20,000 acres near Saratoga; the Saratoga canal, sixty-three miles in length, will take water from the North Platte above Saratoga and will water 50,000 acres of land on the east side of the river; the Platte Valley & Encampment canal, twenty-five miles in length, will take water from the North Platte, fifteen miles above Saratoga, and irrigate 20,000 acres near the mouth of Grand Encampment creek.

Application For 605 Canals.
The records of the state engineer's office show that since Jan. 1, 1903, applications have been filed for 605 canals and ditches, which will have a total length of 712 miles. The estimated cost of these canals is \$1,380,563, and they will irrigate 321,307 acres. These figures do not include the enlargement or extension of canals already in existence. During the same period 127 reservoir applications have been filed. The reservoirs vary in size from one acre to 5,000 acres.

The demand for agricultural lands in Wyoming is increasing and a new era has undoubtedly dawned for agriculture in this state. During the past few years the price of agricultural land has risen from \$2 and \$3 per acre to as high as \$50 and \$60 per acre, and the prospects are that desirable farm lands cannot be had in Wyoming for less than \$10 and \$12 an acre from now on.

The success of the Wheatland colony has probably done more to discredit the belief that prevailed for many years that Wyoming land was not suited for agriculture, than any other one thing. In the Wheatland colony the value of unimproved lands has increased from \$10 per acre in 1890 to \$30 in the present year, while improved land sells at from \$40 to \$60 per acre.

It has been demonstrated at Wheatland, Saratoga, Lander, Sheridan and in other localities where the altitude is below 6,000 feet that all kinds of crops common to this altitude can be successfully grown, and that the future possibilities of agriculture in Wyoming are practically unlimited. Lake Colorado, Utah and other states of the Rocky mountain region, it was thought for many years that the desert-like wastes, sparsely-grassed uplands and sagebrush flats were fit only for the grazing of sheep, cattle and horses; but sentiment has changed, and now that the possibilities of the future have been demonstrated in a small way, the people are going ahead and are taking advantage of the opportunities.

During the year the geological survey made exhaustive examinations of prospective reservoir and irrigation projects on the Platte and Shoshone rivers. Probably nothing will be done with the latter project, but it is almost certain that the government will build a reservoir near Alameda, the dam being built in the Grand Canyon of the Platte. This, it is said, will be the largest reservoir in the world when completed, even larger than the great Assuan reservoir in Egypt.

Fruit Culture Profitable.
Wyoming will not only soon become as great a state in agriculture as she has been in livestock growing and the raising of coal and oil, but she is destined to become great in fruit growing, for in the Lander, Sheridan and other valleys all kinds of fruits are being successfully grown. Near Lander Ed Young planted an orchard many years ago, being the pioneer in fruit culture in the state. He has since the beginning of the year been supplying the town of Lander and the neighboring settlements with apples and other fruits. The farmers of Sheridan are growing apples, peaches, fruit, and not only supply the home demand, but annually ship many carloads of berries and other fruits to other towns. At Wheatland, and also in some of the Big Horn basin colonies, fruit trees planted a few years ago are beginning to bear luscious fruit, and the success of fruit growing in these colonies is awakening to the present needs of the livestock industry, which, owing to the scarcity of range feed and the necessity of putting up feed for winter use, has created a sharp demand for alfalfa and other feed crops.

For the first time in many years, since the boom days of the range business, the livestock industry of Wyoming retrograded during the year just closing, but the decrease in production of mutton, wool and beef was not as large as the decrease in the same conditions that prevailed in this state—shortage of feed and severe winter storms—obtained in every state and territory. The losses were not as heavy and unprecedented losses are universal.

Conservative estimates place the loss to the cattle industry at a million and a quarter dollars, and the decrease in sheep, caused by the storm losses and the low price paid for beef cattle.

In 1902 Wyoming produced 24,000,000 pounds of wool valued at \$5,833,345, while in 1903 the wool clip aggregated 23,700,000 pounds, valued at \$4,500,160, a decrease in tonnage of wool of over 6,000,000 pounds, and a loss of over a million dollars. The number of sheep in Wyoming in 1902 was 4,614,750, while in 1903 the number was reduced to 4,100,000, a loss of over half a million sheep, or a loss in value of about \$1,500,000, which, with the loss on the wool clip, gives a total loss to the sheep industry alone of over \$2,000,000.

During the year the flockmasters and cattle growers engaged in general dipping of the flocks and herds and the close of the season practically witnessed the eradication of disease. All owners put up larger quantities of feed during the summer for winter feed, and it is safe to say that never again will the livestock industry be dealt as severely as during the past year. The herds and flocks were smaller, but perhaps more numerous. From now on, and there will be more precautions taken against winter losses.

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Railroad Building in Wyoming.
During the year the new work being done by the Laramie-Hahn's Peak & Pacific, which completed its grade from Laramie to Centennial, a distance of thirty miles, and laid rails in the Laramie yards. The Union Pacific made some improvements on its main line in the state, and its branches were built.

New Railroads Building.
The coming year promises much in the way of new roads. The Laramie, Hahn's Peak & Pacific will complete its line to Centennial and have that portion of the road in operation, while the grade will be extended toward Grand Encampment. Among the prospective roads, work upon which will probably be commenced during the coming year, are the extension of the Calumet-Cody line of the Burlington to Meeteetse, the Kirwin mines and possibly to the Yellowstone valley. A branch line may also be built from Garland to the Bonanza oil fields. The Colorado Fuel & Iron company will build a number of spur lines to connect the iron mines with the Wyoming & Colorado at Sunrise, in northern Laramie county. The Union Pacific may build a branch line from Alameda to the Bonanza and Grand Encampment. The Belgo-American Oil Drilling trust, which recently purchased properties at base and salt wells, has also begun to build a road from Casper to Lander, via Alameda and Johnstown. And there are other lines of railroad projected, and many of them will be commenced during the coming year.

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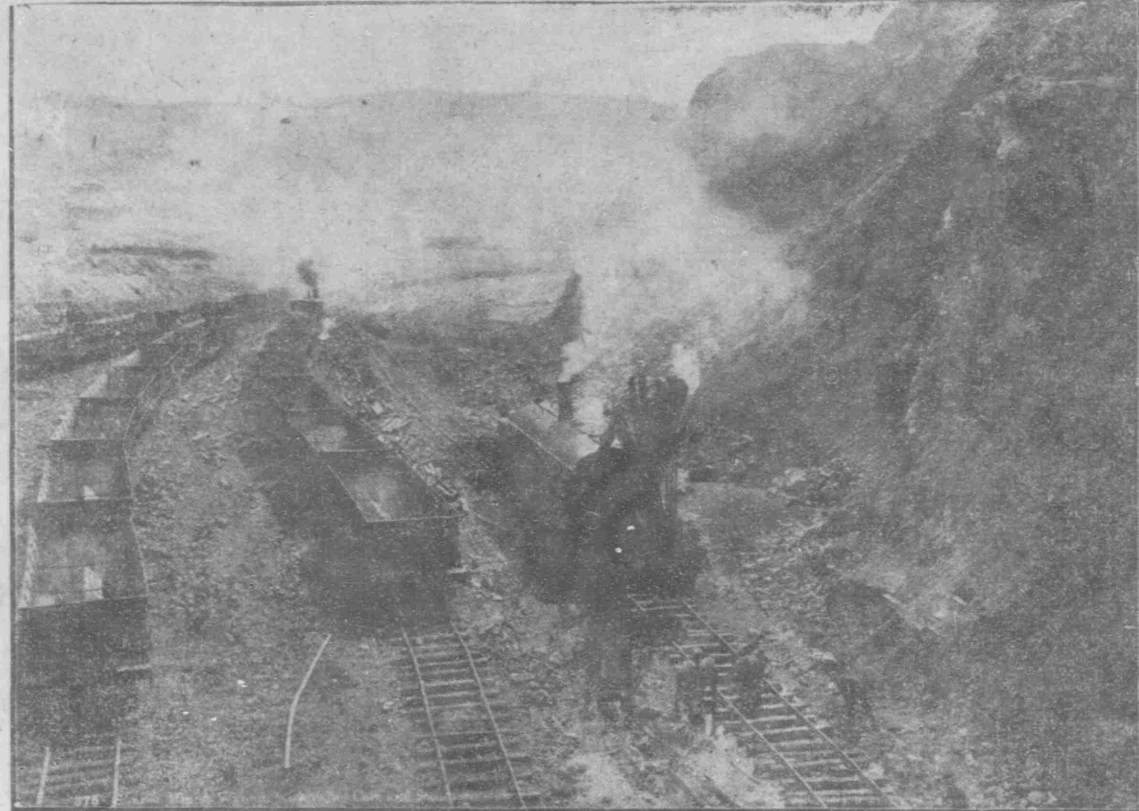
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Ed Young's Apple Orchard, Near Fremont, Wyoming.



Sunrise Iron Mines of Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, Laramie County, Wyoming.

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